

Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force Work Groups

Delta Vision Strategic Plan

Proposed Role, Focus and Management of Work Groups

Overview

Four work groups have been formed to support the Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force Strategic Planning process. These are:

1. Ecosystem function: The Delta as integral part of healthy estuary
2. Delta as a unique and valued place, warranting recognition and special legal status.
3. Reliable water supply for California
4. Governance and strategic finance.

Each work group has received an initial charge from the Blue Ribbon Task Force. These “charges” build directly on the 12 recommendations that are the foundation of the Task Force Vision, and borrow from the language of the Vision, which serves to help integrate the activities of the work groups.

Work groups members, named by the Task Force, include government agency staff, consultants, members of the Stakeholder Coordination Group with noted expertise on the topics under consideration, and others with similar expertise. Work groups are limited to approximately 10 people to ensure they can work quickly and nimbly in the time allotted.

Each work group will follow a similar template to develop content on their assigned topics. This will not only provide a focus for their work but also make the process of integrating the elements of the strategic plan more efficient.

Proposed Planning Process and Group Management

Each group is supported by a lead Delta Vision staff member(s), technical expert and facilitator. The lead staff members and technical experts will provide data and information collection support and help develop work group products.

The primary focal points for each work group include:

1. Accept charge, review goals in vision, develop strategies to achieve goals and develop first cut at performance measures.
2. Assess system capacity to achieve goals in this area, refine performance measures and finalize.
3. Preliminary recommendations re: actions to achieve goals by changing/improving system capacity.
4. Final recommendations, including integration with other work in strategic plan.

One full-day meeting is anticipated for each of the first two sets of tasks, and the preliminary recommendations are anticipated by the end of April. Significant work will be conducted between meetings to support this meeting schedule and envisioned outcomes.

Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force Work Groups
The California Delta Work Group

Charge:

“Special status” for the Delta

1. Identify sustainable characteristics of the Delta that warrant “recognition and special legal status”
 - *Which characteristics that make the Delta a unique and valued area are most prone to impact from the effects of seismic activity, global warming and sea level rise?*
 - *How might these characteristics be protected?*
 - *How can this special designation be made in a fashion that preserves Delta communities’ economic and social vitality?*
 - *The Delta Protection Act identified agriculture, wildlife, and recreation as equally important values of the Delta landscape – is this an appropriate balance to maintain in the Delta Vision strategic plan?*
 - *What “tools” are available to identify these characteristics?*
 - *What governance issues must be addressed to implement recognition and potential protection?*

Land use

2. Identify land use and other practices that potentially threaten the unique nature of the Delta, and strategies to reduce these threats and protect/enhance the Delta
 - *How can we balance avoidance of urbanization with the need for affordable housing for those who work in the Delta, especially farm workers? What is the potential role of housing element law?*
 - *If land is taken out of private ownership, how can “checkerboarding” be prevented and local tax revenue streams be preserved?*
 - *How can land use regulations provide appropriate flexibility for land managers, including farmers, open space managers, and flood control managers?*
 - *What “mixtures” of land uses can be created to enhance the landscape and ecosystem of the Delta (i.e., ag and land use)*
 - *What is the appropriate role of incentives versus land interest acquisition to drive desirable land use patterns?*
 - *How should “inappropriate development” be defined, and what options exist or are needed to discouragement this type of development?*
 - *To what extent are current authorities sufficient, or need to be augmented, to protect the unique characteristics of the Delta?*

Delta Assets

3. Identify how best to address business, recreation, tourism, transportation, utilities, and “public values” issues, particularly in the context of the drivers of sustainable change

- *What options exist to offset, mitigate, plan for and address the transition from current conditions/landscapes to those resulting from the identified drivers of change?*
- *Can the Delta economy and local communities and institutions be made adaptable and resilient to the drivers of change?*
- *How should the strategic plan address the fact that some infrastructure systems rely on locally generated revenue streams?*
- *How do we ensure adequate housing and water quality protection for low-income communities of color living in the Delta?*
- *What is the “critical mass” of agriculture in the Delta needed to sustain agribusiness in the region?*

Emergency Management

4. Identify sustainable management strategies and policies for water supply, public safety, and protection of property to prevent, manage, and recover from emergency and flood events.
 - *Who is currently working on these issues, how is coordination being conducted, and how can ongoing work be incorporated in Delta Vision?*
 - *What are the emergency management strategies and efforts that should be developed and coordinated with local state and federal authorities?*
 - *What level of risk are we willing to accept that certain facilities will be flooded? What level of protection is appropriate for these facilities?*
 - *Identify appropriate response levels for varying levels of risk.*

Levees

5. Develop a list of priority levees and the level of protection needed (in light of potential future scenarios) to help “establish priorities for strategic investment”
 - *What is the current system for making public investment decisions (new land acquisitions or capital projects, major improvements or major renovations) in the Delta and are these sufficient to provide for future changes?*
 - *Anticipating the conditions resulting from sea level rise, a seismic event or flooding from surface water flows, how should investments be prioritized?*
 - *How can the land-water interface be made healthy and attractive?*
 - *How can the “optimization process” and other products of DRMS be used to identify levee maintenance and enhancement priorities?*
 - *In the face of climate change, what is the long-term viability of “fortress Delta” and what would be an appropriate time-frame for a large-scale transition to another landscape configuration? What is the role of compensation in this?*

Floodplain Management

6. Identify opportunities and develop sustainable strategies to protect, enhance and restore floodplains, while coordinating with other initiatives and current land use practices in addressing these issues
 - *What floodplain management practices are needed to protect investments in the Delta?*
 - *Where are the greatest opportunities to utilize floodplains to benefit the Delta?*

Major Topics to be Addressed:

A. Land Use

- Legacy towns
- Primary/Secondary zone issues
- Agriculture

B. Levees and Floodplains (as Part of the Statewide Water Management System)

- Strengthen selected levees
- Improve floodplain management
- Improve water circulation and quality

C. Emergency Management

D. Recreation and Tourism

E. Transportation

F. Utilities

G. Others?

Work Group Members:

1. Marci Coglianese, fmr Mayor, Rio Vista
2. Gilbert Cosio, MBK Engineers
3. Topper van Loben Sels, Landowner/DPC
4. Curt Schmutte, MWD
5. Steve LaMar, BIA
6. Tom Zuckerman, Central Delta WA
7. Jeff Hart, Hart Restoration and DPC
8. John Cain, Natural Heritage Inst.
9. Russ Rote, U.S. Army Corps of Eng.
10. Ken Trott, CA Dept of Food and Ag

Resource Support, including:

Lenora Clark
 Tom Flinn
 Jeff Kaspar
 Mike McGowan
 Jim Spering
 Mary Piepho
 Andy Moran
 SACOG/ABAG
 CalTrans
 National Park Service
 PUC
 State Tourism Commission
 Noah Tilghman (State Parks)

Leadership Team:

Lead Staff Member: Linda Fiack/Sergio Guillen

Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force Work Groups
Lead Technical Expert: Dave Mraz
Lead Facilitator: Bill Eisenstein

Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force Work Groups
Delta Ecosystem as Part of a Healthy Estuary

Charge:

Ecosystem Functions

1. Identify key Delta ecosystem functions that contribute to or are necessary for a healthy estuary
 - *What are the key functions? Functions associated with supporting species and functions that are other/non-species specific (flood attenuation, water quality, climate modulation, etc.)*
 - *Which functions are most critical to achieving and maintaining a healthy estuary?*
 - *Which functions are most sensitive to the stressors placed on the Delta ecosystem?*
 - *Identify which key factors influence the Delta ecosystem that are upstream, within and below the Delta.*
 - *What priorities do you give to restoring functions in the short term and long term?*
 - *Clarify the importance of channel geometry to ecosystem function. How do you deal with the current canal geometry when restoring ecosystem functions?*
2. Identify strategies for restoring, protecting or enhancing the key functions of the Delta ecosystem (These strategies could occur within the Delta, its watershed, and/or the lower Estuary)
 - *Identify the strategies for restoring a healthy estuary.*
 - *Where and how can you best use natural processes to achieve sustainable restoration of ecosystem functions?*
 - *What are the available strategies for dealing most effectively with current and future stressors on the Delta ecosystem?*
 - *How do these strategies relate to water supply reliability strategies and tools?*
 - *What are the available strategies for dealing most effectively with improving habitat functions that affect the Delta ecosystem?*
 - *What are the available strategies for dealing most effectively with improving processes that support the Delta ecosystem?*
 - *What are the strategies needed for providing water quality needed for the ecosystem?*
 - *How might these strategies adversely affect other beneficial uses of the Delta?*
 - *Identify some actions that could be implemented immediately, that are relatively simple and can be employed quickly.*
 - *What is our strategy for effective accomplishment of the goals?*
 - *What is realistic considering the altered state of the system? Geometry, invasives, wastewater inflow, upstream diversions, etc?*

Water Management Systems

3. Identify how to modify water management systems in order to achieve the greatest improvement to ecosystem function
 - *Which water management operations have the greatest impact on Delta habitats and ecosystem functions?*
 - *What is the set of water management attributes that will achieve our goal of improving ecosystem function?*
 - *What changes in timing/patterns of diversions would aid the ecosystem?*
 - *What is the linkage to project operations with and without an isolated facility?*
 - *Are there different strategies to deal with impacts of long-term drought on water management and ecosystem function?*

Ecosystem Design

4. Describe what the ecosystem should look like in the future in order to help shape the ecosystem restoration strategy and guide its long-term adaptive management
 - *What is the desired species composition of the Delta?*
 - *How do you reconcile short-term ESA issues with long-term ecological improvement?*
 - *Are there institutional impediments to ecosystem-based management?*
 - *What are the means to manage or enhance desired species? What are the means to manage or eliminate undesired species?*
 - *Are there suites of species or communities that are either native endemics or characteristic species or functional group -- ways to characterize the end points, understanding that our ability to control that is very limited?*
 - *How do you reconcile the tension between current issue over certain specific (and sometimes listed) species and the longer term needs to consider species composition in general?*

Major Topics to be Addressed:

A. Delta Ecosystem Habitats

- Tidal Marshes
- Non-tidal Wetlands
- Floodplains (coordinate with Delta Levees and Floodplain group)
- Channel margin habitats
- Pelagic or open water habitats
- Flooded islands

B. Delta Ecosystem Processes as Part of a Healthy Estuary

- Freshwater Flows and diversions management
- Water Quality
- Carbon production

Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force Work Groups

- Broad-scale channel geometry
- This list to be expanded upon through the efforts of the Work Group

C. Delta Ecosystem Stressors

- Introduced species
- Contaminants
- Magnitude, location or timing of diversions
- This list to be expanded upon through the efforts of the Work Group (coordinate with DRERIP, BDCP, and ESA Recovery Planning)

D. Delta Ecosystem Functions

- Native resident aquatic species support
- Native anadromous fish species support
- Recreational fishing
- Pacific flyway support
- This list to be expanded upon through the efforts of the Work Group

E. Others?

Work Group Members:

1. Gary Bobker, Bay Institute
2. Rudy Rosen, Ducks Unlimited
3. Jon Burau, USGS
4. Greg Gartrell, Contra Costa WD
5. Bruce Herbold, U.S. EPA
6. Bill Bennett, UC Davis
7. Pete Rhoads, MWD
8. Matt Nobriga, CalFed
9. Roger Fuji, USGS

Resource Support, including:

Steve Chapell
DFG (Carl Wilcox)
Tina Swanson
Mike Healy
FWS
DWR (Ted Sommer)
NOAA Fisheries
Dave Fullerton
County HCP/NCCP Prog. Dir.
John Buettler
Farm Bureau

Leadership Team:

Lead Staff Member: Leo Winternitz/Terry McCauley

Lead Technical Expert: Stuart Siegel

Lead Facilitator: Greg Bourne

Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force Work Groups
Water Supply and Reliability

Charge:

Regional Self-Sufficiency

1. Identify how to improve efficiency of current water use
 - *What options exist and what order-of-magnitude can be achieved?*
 - *What and where are the greatest opportunities?*
 - *What are the best approaches to incentives improvements? (e.g. pricing, regulatory mandates, etc.)*
 - *How do options vary regionally?*
 - *What are the current barriers?*
 - *What benefits are expected at the Delta and how might they vary regionally?*
 - *What is the best scale (e.g. local, regional, statewide) to implement and monitor conservation?*
2. Develop strategies to encourage increased reliance on other local supplies sources
 - *How can source water quality, as a factor in water reuse, be managed?*
3. Develop strategies for improved integrated water supply management
 - *What options exist to improve the flexibility for water users/purveyors to reliably switch sources while maintaining appropriate levels of reliability?*

Diversions from the Delta Watershed for Agricultural and Human Use

4. Develop strategies to allow reduced diversions during critical times while being consistent with the co-equal objectives stated in the Delta Vision.
 - *What types of operational changes in patterns and timing of diversions would be most useful to meeting the primary goals of Delta Vision?*
 - *What are the risks and limitations for water users/purveyors upstream of the Delta, in the Delta, and exporting from the Delta?*
5. Identify strategies to co-equally manage water quality to meet drinking water and ecosystem requirements
 - *How can water quality be optimized for drinking water (public health) and ag uses?*
 - *How can conflicting goals of drinking water and environmental water quality be managed?*

Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force Work Groups
Storage and Conveyance

6. Identify ways to integrate water management operations in support of key ecosystem functions
 - *What physical infrastructure is best able to provide needed patterns and timing of diversions?*
 - *What are the respective roles and quantities of ground and surface storage that can be achieved and how should they be integrated?*
 - *How can reservoir operations be better integrated to provide multiple water management benefits including flood protection and new water supply yield?*
 - *What changes in floodplain management are necessary to improve overall water system reliability and efficiency?*

Reasonable use and public trust principles

7. Identify institutional barriers to these principles when making decisions on California water resources
 - *How should historic application of these principles be used to guide managing conflicts between ecosystem and diverted water uses?*

Major Topics to be Addressed:

- A. Improved Efficiency
 - Regional self sufficiency
 - Demand management
 - New technology
- B. Integrated Water System Management
 - Storage: ground and surface
 - Reservoir operations
 - Improved conveyance
- C. Reduced or Changed Patterns of Diversions to Support a Revitalized Delta Ecosystem
 - Climate change
 - Public Trust
 - Reasonable Use
- D. Others?

Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force Work Groups

Potential Work Group Members:

Resource Support, including:

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. Byron Buck, MWD and Westlands | John Woodling |
| 2. Jonas Minton, PCL | Bill Earp |
| 3. Greg Zlotnick, SCVWD | Randy Fiorini |
| 4. Spreck Rosecrans, EDF | Roberta Goulart |
| 5. Brent Walthall, KCWA | Ronnie Cohen |
| 6. Rick Soehren, DWR | Kathy Manion |
| 7. Ann Lubas-Williams, Bur. of Reclamation | Farm Bureau |
| 8. Jim Kassel, St. Water Res. Control Bd | |
| 9. Mel Lytle, San Joaquin County | |
| 10. Ryan Broddrick , NCWA | |
| 11. Elaine Archibald, CUWA | |

Leadership Team:

Lead Staff Member: Terry Macaulay/Sergio Guillen

Lead Technical Expert: Greg Young

Lead Facilitator: Bill Eisenstein

Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force Work Groups
Governance and Finance Work Group

The purpose of the Governance and Strategic Finance component of the Delta Vision Strategic Plan is to develop a range of proposed governance and finance structures and mechanisms for consideration by the Blue Ribbon Task Force.

Charge:

Governance of Co-Equal Objectives

1. In consideration of the Vision's recommendation to establish one governing authority for managing the co-equal objectives of ecosystem revitalization and adequate water supply for California, identify and explore potential new governance options and authorities
 - *What models exist in other states and countries that might be applicable to governance of the co-equal objectives?*
 - *How should management of diversions and exports be linked to management of the ecosystem and visa versa?*
 - *Identify the potential problems and solutions associated with one governing authority managing the co-equal objectives.*
2. Identify how to incorporate the following six attributes into the entity described above
 - *Sufficient authority*
 - *Sufficient financing to sustain activities over decades*
 - *Clear, effective working relationships with other governmental agencies*
 - *Effective integration of stakeholder and expert contributions into decision making*
 - *Support from state and federal policies to align incentives and costs*
 - *Ability to act quickly*
 - *Ability to adapt over time to better meets its goals*

Governance of Land Use

3. Identify structures to better manage land use on a Delta-wide scale
 - *How can local government officials be engaged most effectively to help implement the overarching goals of the Vision?*
 - *How can issues associated with the tensions between "local rule" and integrated planning and governance be resolved?*
 - *What role should the Delta Protection Commission or some new structure play in making Delta land use decisions?*
 - *Is the existing configuration of primary and secondary zones adequate to protect the Delta and encourage appropriate development in local communities?*

Governance of Other Vision Components

4. Identify other governance structures to manage the resources of the Delta
 - *What are the key elements of the Delta Vision recommendations needing governance?*
 - *How can these elements be best aligned within a comprehensive governance structure?*
5. Identify other governance authorities and structures that will be needed for attaining the goals of the Vision
 - *How might the principles of reasonable use and public trust be applied to meet the goals of the Vision?*
 - *How can decision making, financing and liability be joined effectively?*
 - *What incentives and disincentives can be used to help achieve the Vision?*

Strategic Financing

6. Develop a Strategic Financing Plan including the range of possible funding options
 - *What financing principles should guide the development of the Strategic Financing Plan?*
 - *In response to the Vision's statement that "beneficiaries must pay their appropriate share of [water] investments...", what are the most effective approaches of applying this principle to finance Delta solutions?*
 - *How should priorities be established to guide the expenditure of available funds, incorporating the potential impacts of seismic activity, climate change and sea level rise?*
 - *What conditions should be placed upon expenditures to ensure that they are supporting the 12 Task Force Recommendations?*
 - *What assurances can be built-in to ensure funds will be used for their intended purposes and that the anticipated benefits are being accrued?*

Major Topics to be Addressed:

- A. New Governance and Authorities
 - a. Water Use, Rights, and Exports
 - b. Ecosystem Function
 - c. Land Use
- B. Resiliency and Adaptable Institutions and Policies
- C. Attainment of Primary Goals of Vision (i.e., implications of co-equal values)
- D. Finance Plan
- E. Environmental Justice

Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force Work Groups
F. Others?

Potential Work Group Members:

1. Christopher Cabaldon, Mayor W. Sac
2. Barry Nelson, NRDC
3. Jim Levine, Bay Council
4. Arne Simonson, Chair, DPC
5. Joan Dym, So. Cal Water Committee
6. Debbie Davis, EJCW
7. John Griffing, UC Sacramento Center
8. TBD
9. TBD

Resource Support, *including*:

Mike McGowan
Susan Tatayon
BCDC
CSAC
League of Cities
California Research Bureau
DPC
DFG
Bur of Reclamation
DWR
FWS
NOAA Fisheries
State Water Resources Control Bd
State Lands Commission

Leadership Team:

Lead Staff Member: Elizabeth Patterson/TBD
Lead Technical Expert: Gwyn-Mohr Tully
Lead Facilitator: Greg Bourne

Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force Work Groups
Delta Vision Strategic Plan

STRATEGIC PLAN TEMPLATE

This “template” will be used by each work group to guide their activities and improve the efficiency of integrating planning efforts across different Strategic Plan work areas.

- I. Acknowledge the Primary Recommendations from the Vision as the Foundation for the Delta Strategic Plan
- II. Acknowledge the Charge Associated with Each Work Group
- III. Identify Performance Measures and Criteria for Strategic Plan Work Areas
- IV. Evaluate Current Practices, Policies and Programs for Consistency with Recommendations
- V. Develop Strategies and Tools for Each Strategic Plan Work Area to Achieve the Goals of the Vision
- VI. Evaluate Strategies and Tools for Their Effectiveness When Integrated Across Different Work Areas and Considering Drivers of Change
- VII. Identify/Make Recommendations for Future Decision Making and Conflict Resolution
- VIII. Identify Steps to Advance Implementation of the Plan